



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Former Pinellas County elementary school teacher indicted on child pornography charges

Tampa, FL - U.S. Attorney Paul I. Perez and Special Agent in Charge Robert R. Weber, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), announced today the unsealing of an indictment charging Kenneth Charles Fire, age 58, with possessing, receiving, and distributing child pornography. Fire made his first appearance in U.S. District Court today and was released on \$25,000 bond. If convicted he faces a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment.

The investigation began in August of 2005 when ICE agents suspected Fire had child pornography in his possession. After being confronted by ICE special agents, Fire a resident of St. Petersburg, resigned from his job as a computer technology teacher and reading coach at Maximo Elementary School in Pinellas County.

A week ago today Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales announced the implementation of "Project Safe Childhood." This initiative is aimed at protecting children from online exploitation and abuse. More information is available on this initiative at: www.usdoj.gov

This case was investigated by ICE and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Anthony Porcelli.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.